

CLAIMS

1. A method of limiting communication between an application and a user, via a sensing device interacting with machine-readable coded data printed on a surface, the method comprising the steps, performed in a computer system, of:
 - 5 (a) receiving interaction data representing the interaction of the sensing device with the coded data, the interaction data enabling identification of the application;
 - (b) transmitting information based on at least some of the interaction data to the application; and
 - (c) enabling transmission of up to a predetermined number of electronic messages from the application to the user.
- 10 2. A method according to claim 1, wherein step (c) includes the steps of:
 - incrementing a contact count for each electronic message sent from the application to the user; and
 - preventing transmission of further electronic messages once the contact count reaches a predetermined maximum value
- 15 3. The method of claim 2, wherein maximum value is one.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the maximum value is zero.
5. The method of claim 2, wherein the maximum value is set by the user.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the maximum value is set by the user through interaction of the sensing device with the printed competition entry form, the method including the steps of receiving, in the computer system, data indicative of the maximum value from the sensing device.
- 20 7. The method of claim 5, wherein the data indicative of the maximum value is indicative of the sensing device having been used to interact with the printed competition entry form to check a box or indicate a selection of the maximum value.
- 25 8. The method of claim 5, wherein the data indicative of the maximum value is indicative of the sensing device having been used to interact with the printed competition entry form to write a number, the number being interpreted as the maximum value.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the message is sent by the application in response to an electronic status request sent to by the application by the user.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic message is indicative of a status of the competition.
11. The method of claim 1, further including the steps, performed in the computer system, of:
 - assigning an alias ID to the user; and
 - 5 transmitting the alias ID to the application with the information based on the interaction data, thereby maintaining anonymity of the user with respect to the application.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein the printed surface is a product label.
13. The method of claim 9, wherein the application is under the control of a manufacturer, producer or other commercial entity associated with the product label.
- 10 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the electronic message is indicative of any one or more of the following:
 - a confirmation of receipt of the interaction data; and
 - a response based on the interaction data received in the computer system;
- 15 15. The method of claim 1 wherein the surface is a product label including human-readable information.
16. The method of claim 15, wherein at least some of the coded data includes a label identifier.
17. The method of claim 16, wherein the label identifier is a unique product item identifier.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein the unique product item identifier is an electronic
20 product code.
19. The method of claim 18, wherein the machine-readable coded data is substantially invisible to a human.
20. A system for: enabling an user to enter a competition; and limiting subsequent communication between a application and the user; via a sensing device interacting with
25 machine-readable coded data printed on a surface, the system comprising a computer system configured and programmed to:
 - (a) receive interaction data representing the interaction of the sensing device with the coded data;
 - (b) transmit information based on the interaction data to the application; and

(c) enable transmission of up to a predetermined number of electronic messages from the application to the user.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the computer system is configured and programmed to enable the transmission of up to the predetermined number of electronic messages by:

5 incrementing a contact count for each electronic message sent from the application to the user; and preventing transmission of further electronic messages once the contact count reaches a predetermined maximum value

22. The system of claim 21, wherein maximum value is one.

23. The system of claim 21, wherein the maximum value is zero.

10 24. The system of claim 21, wherein the maximum value is set by the user.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the maximum value is set by the user through interaction of the sensing device with the printed competition entry form, the computer system being configured and programmed to receive data indicative of the maximum value from the sensing device.

15 26. The system of claim 25, wherein the data indicative of the maximum value is indicative of the sensing device having been used to interact with the surface to check a box or indicate a selection of the maximum value.

27. The system of claim 24, wherein the data indicative of the maximum value is indicative of the sensing device having been used to interact with the surface to write a number, the number
20 being interpreted, the computer system, as the maximum value.

28. The system of claim 20, wherein the surface includes human-readable information, the interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the human-readable information such that at least some of the coded data coincident or adjacent the human-readable information is sensed during the interaction.

25 29. The system of claim 20, wherein the coded data relates to an identity of the surface, and the interaction data is indicative of the identity.

30. The system of claim 20, wherein the form includes one or more of: information fields that show information about the surface; button fields that generate one or more actions in the computer system when interacted with by the sensing device; and entry fields for receiving user
30 input through interaction of the sensing device with the entry fields; the interaction data representing interaction of the sensing device with the one or more fields.

31. The system of claim 20, wherein the surface is a printed product label.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein at least some of the coded data includes a label identifier.
33. The method of claim 32, wherein the label identifier is a unique product item identifier.
34. The method of claim 20, wherein the unique product item identifier is an electronic
5 product code.
35. The system of claim 34, wherein the application is under the control of a manufacturer, producer or other entity associated with the product bearing the product label.
36. The system of claim 33, wherein the computer system includes a page server configured and programmed to convert the interaction data to form data, and to transmit the form data to the
10 application.
37. The system of claim 20, wherein the computer system includes a netpage registration server configured and programmed to identify the user and to allocate an alias ID to maintain anonymity of the user.
38. The system of claim 20, further comprising an internet-accessible location for posting the
15 electronic messages, the electronic messages being accessible to the user via the location.
39. A surface including coded data and human-readable information, configured for use in the method of claim 1 or the system of claim 20.